

DELIVERABLE 1.8

CONSULTATION SUMMARY REPORT

WP1 - CONSULTATION PROCESS

WP Leader: CMET

Target groups: students

Dissemination level: institution

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
AREAS OF INTERVENTION	4
Information and promotion	4
Application	5
Selection	5
Mobility preparation and implementation	6
Recognition and Reporting	7
CONCLUSIONS AND RECCOMENDATIONS.....	7

INTRODUCTION

The present report was developed in the framework of the ICMED project - *International Credit Mobility: A New Challenge in the Mediterranean Region*, co-funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ Programme, Key Action 2 Capacity Building in Higher Education.

The project's general objective is to strengthen the capacity of Higher Education staff in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia to deal with Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility & International Mobility programmes in general, through the implementation of a comprehensive Training Programme. By fostering information and best practices sharing the project is expected to contribute towards an innovative, effective and efficient management of International Credit Mobility in the MENA region.

ICMED Work Package 1 (Consultation Process) was carried out from October 2017 to May 2018 and aimed at Mapping the current status of ICM implementation at institutional (partner countries HEIs) and regional (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia) level, identifying key specific challenges for each partner country. The present report was developed in the framework of Work Package 1 by the *University of Padova, Italy*, project coordinator in collaboration with all partners. It provides a summary of the information collected during the Consultation Process from all the involved stakeholders. Strengths and weaknesses related to the implementation of International Credit Mobility programmes have been identified for each involved country. It will serve as the basis for the development of the training plans and corresponding training weeks to be delivered starting from October 2018.

AREAS OF INTERVENTION

INFORMATION AND PROMOTION

KEY CHALLENGES

- Scarcity of dedicated promotional strategies for ICM
- Limited use of info sessions and social media promotion
- Little involvement of local HEIs especially in rural areas in KA107, difficulties in reaching out to international partners
- Reluctance of top students to participate
- Limited available funding and number of scholarships for staff mobility
- Scarcity of internal promotion about mobility opportunities among staff members, aimed at raising awareness and visibility around such opportunities
- Limited preparation or training provided by the home institution to the staff in view of their stay abroad

GOOD PRACTICES

- Active participation of involved academics
- Excellent word of mouth promotion
- Information services provided by the Universities, such as Info Days, newsletter, institutional website, which are considered by students as efficient sources of information about Erasmus+ programme
- Increasing demand of staff mobility for teaching/training
- Recorded video provided by UAE staff participating in an international mobility programme on his/her experience abroad

IDENTIFIED TRAINING NEEDS

- Drafting and implementing a dedicated promotional strategy (taking into account limited human and financial resources)
- In-depth information on partner search tools
- Preparation and signature of inter-institutional agreements
- Development / sharing of national database listing active KA107 agreements

APPLICATION

KEY CHALLENGES

- Too many documents, mainly paper based
- Short application framework
- Not always adequate support from professors during student application procedures
- Limited technical knowledge of the Action within the HEIs and limited available expertise in terms of practical participation and management of the projects
- Too bureaucratic process for getting the invitation letter and other required documents at the PhD level
- Not sufficient training for staff to prepare the application package

GOOD PRACTICES

- Good assistance to the students from the Universities for the application procedures, required documents and guidelines, especially from the international office staff
- IT platform to collect and fill in application documents

IDENTIFIED TRAINING NEEDS

- Implementing e-application tools to reduce workload on both students and staff, especially in the evaluation phase
- Standardizing application procedures, templates, etc.
- Increasing awareness around EC / ECHE requirements, etc.

SELECTION

KEY CHALLENGES

- Complying with EC / ECHE requirements (e.g. transparency, publication of results, etc.)
- Strengthening transparency of the selection process
- Improvement of communication and coordination between the sending and receiving institution, exchanging information in due time and in a clearer way regarding to the selection procedures and rules
- Improvement of communication on the evaluation and selection criteria, together with the offer of available destinations

GOOD PRACTICES

- Satisfying information about the evaluation criteria and selection procedures, including selection committee

IDENTIFIED TRAINING NEEDS

- Increasing awareness around EC / ECHE requirements, etc.
- Standardizing selection procedures, templates, etc.

MOBILITY PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

KEY CHALLENGES

- Partial understanding of ECTS tools (Learning Agreement, Transcript of Records, etc.) and difficulty to adapt to local practices
- Little academic follow-up during the mobility period by home university
- Little preparation by home university before mobility (e.g. linguistic, cultural, social preparation)
- Little experience in welcoming / managing incoming students / staff
- Visa issues and little involvement of NEOs/ Local Authorities in this regard
- Lack of intercultural training and difficulties in offering language courses to students in the phase of preparation of mobility
- Difficulty in supporting students on mobility services, such as opening a bank account and finding an accommodation

GOOD PRACTICES

- Good assistance to students in requesting visa and insurance
- Satisfying support to students, during the mobility, for change of Learning Agreement, research follow-up and ongoing assistance
- Good communication with the supervisors during the mobility

IDENTIFIED TRAINING NEEDS

- Training on the objectives and uses of ECTS tools
- Standardization of internal procedures
- Stronger collaboration with NEOs on issues such as visa applications, etc.
- Guidelines on how to better prepare outgoing students (e.g. linguistic and intercultural training)
- Management of incoming mobility flows

RECOGNITION AND REPORTING

KEY CHALLENGES

- Lack of recognition of PhD and staff mobility activities
- Lack of standardized procedures for credit conversion and recognition
- Difficulty in managing the extension of the mobility period abroad, especially in the case of research or preparation of thesis, and maintaining after the mobility a scientific cooperation between the host research laboratory and the laboratory of origin

GOOD PRACTICES

- Good evaluation by students on length, clarity and transparency of the recognition procedure
- Positive impact of the international mobility experience on the academic and professional careers

IDENTIFIED TRAINING NEEDS

- Training on the objectives and uses of ECTS tools
- Standardization of internal procedures
- Stronger collaboration with NEOs so to share good practices at national level, set up joint national tools, etc.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECCOMENDATIONS

General issues:

KEY CHALLENGES

- Not structured/formalized internationalisation strategies
- Limited human resources (especially on the administrative side) assigned to the management of ICM programmes and international affairs in general
- Limited training opportunities for staff involved in ICM management
- Language barriers (English vs French, Arabic)
- Improving experience of local staff in all procedures of the application, selection, implementation and recognition phases, especially regarding to the use of transparency and recognition tools
- Improving promotion and welcoming services to attract more foreign students and researchers

- Planning specific mobility exchanges to improve the technical expertise for academic and administrative staff involved in the internationalisation strategy of the institution
- The mobility process is generally perceived as too bureaucratic by both students and staff (too many documents to be completed)
- Staff dedicated to the international mobility is not always clearly recognizable

GOOD PRACTICES / OPPORTUNITIES

- Excellent general perception around ICM programmes, its usefulness, impact on employability of graduates, etc.
- Local HE systems compatible with Bologna Process related systems
- Involvement of local governments investing in international/regional cooperation and mobility as the main pillar of HE strategic plans
- Previous successful experience in cooperation projects (e.g. Erasmus Mundus programme)
- General good perception on Erasmus+ KA107 ICM as an important opportunity to develop the international dimension of the involved HEIs, both by providing learning/training/teaching opportunities abroad to its students and staff and by offering more international learning/teaching opportunities at home to its academic community

IDENTIFIED TRAINING NEEDS

- How to start preparing a written internationalisation strategy and get it approved at institutional / local / national level
- How to set up and structure an International Office (including administrative staff)
- How to make the best of existing collaboration with EU partners to maximise efficiency in ICM implementation